REMARKS

Claims 1, 5 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,694,593 ("Baclawski"). Claims 2 through 4 and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Baclawski in view of U.S. Patent 5,884,303 ("Brown"). Independent claims 1, 6 and 7 are herein amended.

Both Baclawski and Brown concern "fragments" in the context of parallel searching in multiple nodes or files. According to Baclawski, a "home" node receives a query and fragments the query. Column 2, lines 6 through 8; column 3, line 25 through 27. A fragment of a query is referred to as a "probe." Column 1, lines 30 and 31. Hashed query fragments are distributed to computer nodes. Column 3, lines 45 through 50. The nodes that receive the probes perform searches on their respective databases. Column 2, lines 12 through 14. A node whose probe matches an indexed term or label by which data was initially stored on that node responds to the query by transmitting, to the home node, object identifiers matching the index terms of the requested information. Column 3, lines 50 through 56.

By contrast, the present invention concerns refining a search that contains "fragments" in the sense of multiple search terms. Page 2, lines 4 through 11. As stated in claim 1, for example, the invention involves handling queries that include two or more data fragments. Data fragments are also refer to as "text fragments." Page 5, line 26 through page 6, line 2. Examples of data or text fragments in a query include words or groups of words. Page 6, line 26 through page 7, line 5 (for example, "her cat" and "green"). Data is searched to find a match with the data fragments of the query, and, more particularly, to locate a specific portion of the data referred to as a "minimal portion." The term "minimal portion" has a specifically stated meaning. Page 4, lines

· Docket JP920000136US1

Appl. No.: 09/826,710
Filed: April 5, 2001

11 through 14 (". . . a portion of data containing only one complete set of the data fragments . . .

but . . . at least one of the data fragments will appear only once.") This means, among other

things, that some, but not all, of the data fragments in the query can appear more than once in the

minimal portion of data. At least one data fragment must appear only once in the portion, or else

the portion is not "minimal."

In an example, data including the fragments "ABBAACCA" is subject to a query

consisting of the three data fragments "A," "B" and "C." Page 4, lines 15 through 18.

This yields the minimal data portion "BAAC," in which there is a complete set of the three data

fragments and in which the data fragments "B" and "C" appear only once.

The Office Action equates the originally claimed step of "identifying a minimal portion of

said data that contains matches with all of the data fragments" with the aspect of Baclawski that

concerns responding to a query by transmitting object identifiers matching the *index terms* of the

requested information. That is, it appears "a minimal portion" of the data was interpreted in the

Office Action to mean something like an *index*. To more clearly indicate the meaning of the

"minimal portion" of the data referred to in claims 1, 6 and 7, and to thereby more clearly

distinguish the claimed invention from the cited art, all three claims have been amended to state

that "at least one of the data fragments appears only once in the minimal portion." Neither

Baclawski nor Brown suggest such a minimal portion.

The present invention might be applicable to searches that are conducted in parallel on

multiple nodes or disks. However, with the above explanation and amendments it should be

clear that the claims of the present invention are not directed to fragmenting a query so that

searches can be carried out in parallel for the fragments on respective nodes, as in the case of

Baclawski. Nor are the claims directed to searching in files which are fragmented on multiple

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disks, as in the case of Brown. And it should now be clear that identifying a "minimal portion" of data does not concern identifying an indicia of a match or of data. Therefore, with the above explanation and amendments, it is clear that neither Baclawski nor Brown teach or suggest the present invention of claims 1, 6 and 7.
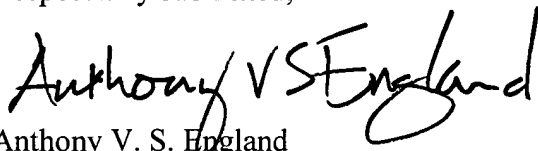
REQUESTED ACTION

1. Applicants contend that the invention as claimed in accordance with amendments submitted herein is patentably distinct, and hereby request that Examiner grant allowance and prompt passage of the application to issuance.

2. Attorney hereby requests an interview with Examiner to discuss the case. An Applicant Initiated Interview Request Form is submitted herewith. Please call or send Attorney an e-mail to confirm or propose a time for the interview.

3. Also submitted herewith is a reference for consideration and appropriate fee authorization. Please examine the application further in view of the reference.

Respectfully submitted,

Anthony V. S. England
Attorney for Applicants
Registration No. 35,129
512-477-7165
a@aengland.com